IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

7. A method for treating female urinary incontinence comprising the steps of:

a) providing a curved needle-like element defining in part a curved shaft;

b) attaching a first end of a tape to the needle, the tape having an expandable chamber for receiving fluid therein;

c) passing the needle and tape into the body;

d) attaching a second end of the tape to the needle and passing the needle and tape into the body to form a sling around the urethra, whereby the expandable chamber is positioned substantially below the urethra;

e) leaving the tape implanted in the body; and

f) adjusting the tape after implantation by injecting fluid into or removing fluid from the expandable chamber to thereby directly increase or decrease support under the urethra.

8. (Twice Amended) A method for treating female urinary incontinence comprising the steps of:

a) providing a first curved needle-like element defining in part a curved shaft;

b) attaching a first end of a tape to the needle;

c) passing the first needle and tape into the body;

d) attaching a second end of the tape to the first needle or to a second needle-like element defining in part a curved shaft and passing the tape and first or second needle into the body to form a sling around the urethra;

e) leaving the tape implanted in the body; and

f) post-surgically injecting a bulking agent into the tape between the tape and urethra, or post-surgically injecting a bulking agent between the tape and the urethra at a location substantially below the urethra and above the vagina.



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9. (Twice Amended) A device for supporting an internal anatomical structure comprising a mesh tape and an expandable chamber in the tape having the ability to contain a variable amount of a fluid, wherein the expandable chamber is positioned between the mesh tape and anatomical structure so that expansion of the expandable chamber directly provides increased support under the anatomical structure.

10. (Twice Amended) A surgical device for treating female urinary stress incontinence comprising:

a) a substantially flat tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female to provide support to the urethra; and

b) an expandable chamber affixed to the tape so that, when the tape is implanted, the expandable chamber is positioned substantially below the urethra and above the vagina, wherein the expandable chamber is expandable by injection of an injectable agent therein, and wherein such expansion directly provides increased support under the urethra.

11. The surgical device according to claim 10, wherein the injectable agent is a bulking agent.

12. The surgical device according to claim 10, wherein the injectable agent is a fluid.

13. The surgical device according to claim 10, wherein the expandable chamber is comprised of a hydrogel.

14. (Twice Amended) A surgical instrument for treating female urinary stress incontinence comprising:

a) a substantially flat, flexible tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female patient to provide support to the urethra, and having a length and a width; and

b) a filamentary element extending along at least a portion of the length of the tape and having a first end affixed to the tape and a second end, the



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filamentary element passing through the tape at least once, whereby manipulation of the second end increases or decreases tension on the tape, thereby providing increased or decreased support to the urethra respectively.

15. (Twice Amended) A method for treating female urinary incontinence comprising the steps of:

a) providing a substantially flat tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female patient to provide support to the urethra;

b) providing an expandable chamber for accepting a fluid therein affixed to the tape;

c) implanting the tape and expandable chamber within the female to form a sling around the urethra, so that the expandable chamber is positioned substantially below the urethra and above the vagina;

d) post-operatively adjusting the sling by injecting fluid into or removing fluid from the expandable chamber to thereby directly increase or decrease respectively support under the urethra.

16. A method for treating female urinary incontinence comprising the steps of:

a) providing a substantially flat, flexible tape for implanting into the lower abdomen of a female patient to provide support to the urethra, the tape having a length, and having a filamentary element extending along at least a portion of the length, the filamentary element having a first end affixed to the tape and a second end and passing through the tape at least once; and

b) manipulating of the second end of the filamentary element to increases or decreases tension on the tape to thereby increase or decrease respectively support to the urethra.

17. The method according to claim 16, wherein the filamentary element is a suture.

18. The method according to claim 16, wherein the filamentary element is positioned substantially along a center of the tape.



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19. The method according to claim 16, wherein the second end of the filamentary element is accessible via the patient's vagina.

20. The method according to claim 16, wherein the filamentary element is woven into through the tape at a plurality of locations.



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